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28 May 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for National Foreign Assessment
FROM: Director of Central Intelligence
SUBJECT: Potential for Qadhafi or Terrorist Group to
Obtain a Nuclear Bomb

25X1 1. Attached is a highly speculative intelligence report [] concerning the potential for an Islamic "bomb." While I don't put a lot of credence in the details of this report, I do have a lot of concern that Qadhafi seems intent on trying to get his hands on a bomb. Qadhafi has access to all sorts of sophisticated military hardware; he has lots of money; he has access [] stored. I frankly wonder whether there isn't an increasing capability for Qadhafi, the PLO, or major terrorist groups to steal a bomb from a U.S., French or UK installation, but especially U.S. installations in foreign countries that have some sympathy to or connections with Qadhafi. []

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2. As I recall our NIE on this subject of about a year and one-half ago, we dwelt primarily on the motivation or intentions of terrorists with respect to the acquisition of nuclear weapons. I still agree with the general conclusions of that estimate that most terrorist groups do not have this motive. Perhaps today I would be a little more worried that a terrorist group could be so motivated by a lot of money offered by Qadhafi, but I also wonder whether we should take another look at that estimate with an eye to changing circumstances. Should we be more concerned today with the capabilities of terrorist groups to obtain weapons in light of the fact that Qadhafi might well give them the motivation to do so? []

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STANFELD TURNER

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Attachment

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Next 3 Page(s) In Document Exempt